

Message Text

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TO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

S E C R E T STATE 013291

EXDIS-MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEAT BANGKOK 1045 ACTION SECSTATE 20 JAN

QUOTE

S E C R E T BANGKOK 1045

EXDIS

PLEASE PASS CINCPAC AND SECDEF

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MIL TH

SUBJ: US-RTG DISCUSSIONS ON FORCE LEVELS

REF: A. STATE 12825, B. BANGKOK 443

1. EMBASSY HAS TOLD RTG IN CLEAREST POSSIBLE TERMS AND THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS OF US RELUCTANCE TO ENGAGE IN FORCE LEVEL DISCUSSIONS AAT THIS JUNCTURE, GIVEN EVENTS IN INDOCHINA. CHARUNPHAN NEVERTHELESS SEEMS EQUALLY DETERMINED INITIATE DISCUSSIONS BEFORE THAI ELECTIONS JANUARY 26. ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER NATION, WHICH OFTEN USED AS MOUTHPIECE BY MFA, UNDER BOLD HEADLINE "NEW WITHDRAWAL DISCUSSION SET FOR THIS WEEK" RAN STORY QUOTING CHARUNPHAN AS SAYING

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HE EXPECTED THAI AND AMERICAN AUTHORITIES TO BEGIN NEW

ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS OVER TROOP WITHDRAWAL PROGRAM FOR 1975 BEFORE CURRENT GOVERNMENT LEAVES OFFICE. PAPER FURTHER QUOTED CHARUNPHAN AS SAYING HE HAD INFORMED AMBASSADOR KINTNER TO THIS EFFECT, HE FELT THAT NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD HAVE STARTED EARLIER, AND THAT A TARGET FOR PULLOUT OF TROOPS FOR THIS YEAR WOULD RESULT FROM NEGOTIATIONS.

2. WE EXPECT CHARUNPHAN TO DO ONE OR BOTH OF TWO THINGS:

A) PRESS AMBASSADOR HARD, DURING MEETING SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22 ON ECONOMIC AID AGREEMENT, FOR IMMEDIATE CONVENING OF BILATERAL WORKING GROUP TO OPEN FORCE LEVEL DISCUSSIONS; AND/OR B) SEEK TO CHARACTERIZE WEDNESDAY'S MEETING ITSELF AS INITIAL FORCE LEVEL NEGOTIATION SESSION.

3. IN EFFORT TO FORSTALL THESE DEVELOPMENTS OR MINIMIZE DAMAGE, EMBASSY IS TAKING FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

A. PRIOR TO CHARUNPHAN MEETING, WE ARE SEEKING APPOINTMENT WITH GENERAL KRIT. AT KRIT MEETING, WE WILL: REVIEW CURRENT SECURITY SITUATION IN VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA, POINTING OUT RELATIVE DETERRENT ROLE PLAYED BY US AIR FORCES STATIONED IN THAILAND AGAINST ALL-OUT NVN OFFENSIVE; CALL ATTENTION TO CHARUNPHAN PIECE IN NATION (PARA 1 WRONG); AND EXPRESS ALARM OVER POTENTIAL DAMAGE FROM SENDING WRONG SIGNALS TO HANOI. WE HOPE THIS WILL PRODUCE APPROACH BY KRIT TO CHARUNPHAN SUPPORTING OUR IDEAS.

B. WHEN AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH CHARUNPHAN ON WEDNESDAY, HE WILL BRIEF CHARUNPHAN ON CURRENT SVN AND CAMBODIAN SITUATIONS USING SAME MATERIAL AS WITH KRIT. HE WILL ALSO CALL ATTENTION TO HANOI'S PRESUMED UNCERTAINTY AS TO POSSIBLE REINTRODUCTION OF US FORCES. HE WILL REITERATE OUR VIEW THAT UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, ANY DISCUSSION OF US FORCE LEVELS IN THAILAND COULD HAVE DANGEROUS EFFECT.

4. IF DESPITE FOREGOING CHARUNPHAN REMAINS ADAMANT ON INITIATION OF NEW ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS, WE WILL SEEK TO PIN HIM DOWN AND LIMIT TERMS OF REFERENCE OF WORKING GROUP MEETING AS AUTHORIZED PARA 2 REF A. WE WILL ALSO HAND HIM PRESS STATEMENT AS INSTRUCTED PARA 3 REF A. WE WILL MOREOVER, IF HE INDICATES THAT HE PROPOSES TO BRIEF PRESS

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ON HIS MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR KINTNER AND MAKE REFERENCE TO FORCE LEVELS, PROVIDE HIM WITH ADDITIONAL PRESS STATEMENT FOR HIS USE ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

BEGIN PROPOSED STATEMENT

DURING THE MEETING BETWEEN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CHARUNPHAN ITSARANGKUN NA AYUTTHAYA AND AMBASSADOR

WILLIAM R. KINTNER ON JANUARY 22, 1975, THE GENERAL
SECURITY SITUATION IN THE INDOCHINA AREA WAS EXAMINED.
THE MINISTER AND THE AMBASSADOR AGREED THAT A THAI-US
WORKING GROUP WOULD MEET TO REVIEW THE REDUCTION IN US
FORCE LEVELS IN THAILAND CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
THE AGREEMENT REACHED IN MARCH 1974. IN VIEW OF THE
INTENSIFICATION OF THE CONFLICT IN BOTH CAMBODIA AND
SOUTH VIETNAM, IT IS EXPECTED THAT NO FURTHER REDUCTIONS
IN US AIR FORCES STATIONED ON ROYAL THAI AIR BASES WILL
BE MADE AT THE PRESENT TIME. END PROPOSED STATEMENT.
KINTNER
UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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NNN

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